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QUENTIN MASSYS

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BY

ALFRED DEAKIN.

Melbourne:

PRINTED BY J. F. DONALDSON, ELIZABETH STREET.

MDCCLXXV.

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QUENTIN MASSYS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

*Antwerp by Night—A Street—Drinking House at back—
Men grouped about.*

PHILLIP ROERBACH, CHARLES OLDFELDT, & OTHERS.

CHAS. No, thanks, I've had enough.

PHIL. Come come, another to my success ; you know old Dykvort has been keeping me these two months, while I've been working for the prize : now if I win, I'll repay him and get my fill, but if not, I had better get all I can now. Come at my expense, or rather his.

Enter VISCONTI.

CHAS. Very well, I'll not be churlish.

PHIL. Will you join us Sir ?

VIS. I thank you. *(they are served)*

VIS. I am a stranger here. You have a fine city.

PHIL. Aye, the finest in the world.

CHAS. The first Iron Workers.

PHIL. The largest commerce.

CHAS. The bravest citizens.

VIS. I observe a great number of them.

CHAS. Of course 'tis the festival—you know of that ?

VIS. No, not a word.

PHIL. Heavens ! its the talk of all Holland these three months.—You've seen our magnificent cathedral, Notre Dame ?

VIS. I passed it to day.

PHIL. Well, our noble rulers have proclaimed that whoever shall fashion the noblest piece of Iron Work for its altar shall receive a purse of gold, a ring, and robe, and be crowned as first Artisan of Antwerp in the public square.

CHAS. And first of us means first of all the world.

PHIL. Of course whoever wins will be a made man : so all the most practised craftsmen in the Netherlands

CHAS. Aye ! and in France,

PHIL. Or Germany !

have been for months striving for it.

VIS. And when is it decided ?

PHIL. To-morrow afternoon.

CHAS. (*slapping Phillip*) And this is the man whose going to win.

PHIL. No, No ! consider what numbers there are.

CHAS. Oh ! we know you.

PHIL. Well, I've a pretty good chance.

Enter FRANZ.

FRANZ. Well it's time I was at Quentin's—where the devil drives—but one can't help loving him in spite of his fancies.

CHAS. What ho ! Sir Student, where go you.

FRANZ. To my hermitage—to heaven—to bed.

PHIL. Nonsense ! come and drink with us.

FRANZ. I drink enough with my ears without filling my mouth

CHAS. Thou art curriish.

FRANZ. It were better for me to gnaw a miser's bones than play with thy tongue ; for no bone is as clean picked of meat as thy speech of wit. I'll to my kennel, get you to your thistles.

THE REST. Do not spoil sport.

FRANZ. I see none in swilling at other people's expense, or in playing shoeblack to possible success, nor in dreaming of it and getting puffed up with anticipation, nor yet in wandering about in gay clothes and mocking simple men in their cups. So, the fiend's blessing be with you as safely as his claws are on you, and goodnight.

Exit FRANZ.

VIS. A saucy fellow.

CHAS. Oh ! a very scurvy knave.

PHIL. He respects nothing and no one except that crack brain, Quentin Massys. Come, let us drink. (*they go up*)

SCENE II.

*An ill furnished Room—Lamp low—Books, Tools, &c. strewn about
Clinking and Light shining from the next Room—Music.*

Enter FRANZ.

FRANZ. Hark ! there be hammers : so for many a night

That ghostly rolling has broke the dark air

With muffled dirge. 'Tis hopeless, hopeless !

But I'll rouse him. Quentin ! Quentin !

He hears me not ; bent close in ecstasy

Above the hissing iron : Quentin Massys (*approaching*)

Toiler of night come forth ! (*pause*)

Why linger you.

(*The hammer sounds grow quicker and then ceases*)

QUEN. Finished ! finished ! finished ! (*Falls, Franz catches him*)

FRANZ. Why Quentin, what is this ; come, taste this brandy.

O God ! he's killed himself.

QUEN

Not yet ! not yet !

QUENTIN MASSYS:

A DRAMA

IN

FIVE ACTS,

BY

ALFRED DEAKIN.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Quentin Massys	...	A young Iron Smith.
Van Tuyt	...	A Painter.
Franz Ebhardt	...	A Student.
Dykworth	...	A rich Iron Master.
Charles Oldfeldt	}	Iron Smiths.
Phillip Roerbach		
Visconti	}	Italian Artists
Paulo		
Count di Cerna	...	An Italian Noble.
Rechim	...	A Moneylender.
Adelaide Van Tulyt	...	The Painter's Daughter.
Isabel	...	Her Friend.
Julia	...	Betrothed to Paulo.

Duke—Nobles—Soldiers.

Ironsmiths—Citizens—Artists, Etc, Etc.

Scene.

Antwerp and Italy.

Time.

End of Fifteenth Century.

QUENTIN MASSYS.

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FRANZ. Why Quentin, what is this; come, taste this brandy.

O God! he's killed himself.

QUEN.

Not yet! not yet!

A little life still lingers, tho' around me
 My aching eyes see naught but leprosy
 Of fire and darkness, piercing to my brain.
 'Tis lying yonder, glowing bright and red
 From my fierce hands ; while a great voice resounds
 'Tis finished ! It is finished !

As that from off the Cross of Calvary,
 When darkness fell, and the Temple veil was rent;
 My fond heart echoing the great Architect,
 Who viewed his work and saw that it was good.

FRANZ. You have overworked yourself,
 There rest ; I knew your madness would try you.

QUEN. It grows clearer now ; were I to die,
 Thus on my work accomplished it might be
 The better ending, than to live unthanked :
 Unworthy ! fallen ! fallen ! never risen.

FRANZ. Come gather strength, recall your courage ; I feared
 you would fail.

QUEN. (*springing up*) Go write me failed upon to-morrows
 Then it will brand itself into my soul. [sands ;
 But now let this small triumph live out all,
 It's little breath unchecked—the moths first flight
 About the blaze—'tis finished.

FRAN. You may be fortunate by happy chance.

QUEN. No, no, impossible ! wake not that dream ;
 Such future knows no chance save that of merit,
 And I unfriended—young—untutored—rash :
 Oh no there is no hope, but hide that now.

Have you planned all ?

FRANZ. All's safe ; myself will swear it. Now to rest.

QUEN. No ! you stay here. I'll lay me by the fire.

FRANZ. Tush ! I'm fond of fire, and you shall not have it ; stay
 you here. Watch dogs are sometimes honest—that is if
 fed—so I'll attack your larder.

QUEN. You will find little there ; how can I thank you for all
 your kindness.

FRANZ. Not by words. Give me a purse and prove it.

QUEN. Would that I could : ah ! anything but that.

FRANZ. There sleep secure ; I pledge you my honour to see all
 things safe. (*outside*) And I may as well warn you
 that I've locked the door ; I'll let you out in the morning,
 so goodnight.

QUEN. Goodnight kind traitor. And so I must rest :

Waiting, tho' never yet did waiting seem
 Wisdom to youth or love. The stars grow pale,
 And somewhere in the distance sleeps my love :
 All's in the distance—Hope, and Fame and Love,
 In deepest darkness—but the day is near,
 And tho' it bring defeat, despair, or death,
 It cannot rob me of this little rest,

so very dearly won.

(*Drops on the couch and sleeps*)

SCENE III.

A Street in Antwerp—VISCONTI and CHARLES Meeting.

CHAS. How feel you now?

VIS. My head is ringing as if a thousand clocks were winding up to strike, and yet it never comes off.

CHAS. Oh! you'll soon get hardened.

VIS. We students are not used to such potations.

CHAS. A Student?

VIS. An Italian Artist.

CHAS. I suppose its all the same: you should see Quentin Massys, he'll talk to you by the hour about that stuff; he's always poring over his books as if he were a priest.

VIS. I think you said he was a friend of that fellow who attacked us so last night.

CHAS. What Franz! oh yes: they're a strange pair.

Enter FRANZ.

We were just speaking of you!

FRANZ. The worse luck to a good subject.

VIS. You seem fond of banter.

FRANZ. I use my kerchief to keep off flies.

VIS. And somewhat proverbial.

FRANZ. Shortness of speech is a saving both of time and strength, and your great talker is one who thinks he has too much of one of these of which no man has enough.

VIS. That is philosophical.

FRANZ. Name sense as you will, you cannot mar it; and it is much easier to name than to possess.

CHAS. Come Franz! you students are the most impudent dogs in the city.

FRANZ. I am a student of plain speeches, and to the many truth will be always impudent.

VIS. You are severe to your friends.

FRANZ. I know all their faults, of strangers only some.

Enter QUENTIN.

CHAS. Ah Quentin! pray pacify Franz here, who is making a most savage onslaught on this gentleman, an artist from Italy.

QUEN. Ah! you do not know Franz. An artist, sir?

VIS. A poor one at your service.

QUEN. Would that I were.

VIS. You compete for the prize to-day?

CHAS. Quentin! Ha! ha! Quentin!

FRANZ. What now! (*checks himself*) Sir, it is only the first of the guild who enter for it.

QUEN. And I am poor and feeble.

FRANZ. One of the best scholars in the city.

QUEN. Franz!—this is his satire; what little time I steal

from out the envious night or festal day I give to it. You sir, perchance are deeply read.

VIS. (*distantly*) But little I assure you. I must go.

CHAS. I, the same way.

QUEN. Farewell! I trust to meet again, Sir Artist.

Exit VISCONTI and CHARLES.

QUEN. Was it all safe?

FRANZ. Mine own hands gave it in.

QUEN. How much I owe you Franz!

FRANZ. Tush! it's a child squeals if a drop falls:

QUEN. But you rain kindness—I have no return.

FRANZ. I calculate on your success to pay
The debt you owe me. I'll demand it then,
Fiercely indeed.

QUEN. But not for me the Crown,
Of good achieved—preeminence, or power.
This feeble effort cast into the world,
Is like the cry a sinking swimmer sends
Into the lightless dark; no shore! no sail!
And I must sink like him: for on my hands
I wear the fetters—youth and poverty.

FRANZ. Why! this one prize is not the world—this day
Thy life-long hope. Thou hast not yet overlooked
The cradle of thy mother's arm; thy strength
To what it will be, is an infant's.

QUEN. Well!
I'll drown remembrance in a draught of love;
In one hour I will meet thee.

Exit QUENTIN.

FRANZ. There is some magic in this friend of mine,
That feeds my captious soul with gentlest milk,
And makes me love him. God grant him success—
Tho' that's impossible; the fruit's too high!

Exit FRANZ.

SCENE IV.

Antwerp Cathedral—A Secluded Interior—

QUENTIN and ADELAIDE.

ADEL. But you will win!

QUEN. No, no! there is no hope!

Who sees the moon within a sunny sky—
A pebble amongst jewels—save to scoff
And cast it out.

ADEL. It shall not be; it will not be!

QUEN. Truth terrifies, but only in her breast
Lie peace and power. Think thou then no thought
Of victory; consider what I am:
Feel strong as I do; even to place the wreath

Upon his brow ; nor stir a trembling leaf :
This is my victory !

ADEL. This is enough !

QUEN. And when I view my love ! my hope !

ADEL. Our love ! our hope !

QUEN. (*kissing her*) Our love ! our hope !
My Adelaide ! I cannot tell e'en you,
Beneath the shadow of our mutual vows,
How much I love you ; life itself is but
A petty means to that eternal end.
Thou art my soul the purer part of me,
That earth can taint not. (*she tries to stop him*)

Ah ! do let me speak !

It burns within me so, that utterance is
The deepest balm unto my tossing heart.
I pass the days so silent far from thee,
That the thoughts gather like the summer clouds,
Darkening and choking me until they burst
My own control, as love has done before.

ADEL. As fierce a fire burns brightly in my breast :
But with the force of my long pent up love,
I'm rendered speechless ; for no words could tell
My passion's strength : it is too reverent !
Too holy ! for poor language, breathing but
In music, or the looks of meeting eyes,
When breath & breath, and thought & thought are one,
And kindled each by each, soul speaks to soul.

QUEN. Thy father's frown at the poor blacksmith ?

ADEL. I have faith in him ! The outer crust
Belies his gentle heart—for it is gentle ;
And if thou win to-day ?

QUEN. However high our aim,
To-day is all in all ; and he who fails—
But one brief moment in this rudest race—
May lose the labour of his life or love.

ADEL. But thou wilt win this or a greater prize :
For thou art wise and noble !

QUEN. I thank God
Thou thinkest so sweet flatterer ! but yet
This mighty city thronged with eager heads
And practised hands—the noblest votaries
Of other guilds—all flow to this great sea :
And what is one among them ?

ADEL. One must win !

QUEN. Yes ! and this weakens e'en Ambition's fire :
The One must triumph—but the Many fail ;
And his glad laugh must sink beneath their wail.

ADEL. This selfish strife conducts to noblest ends.
Look round the world : in bird, in beast, in tree ;
The greater merit springs above the crowd,
Tho' growing from the bodies of the less.

Man rises by the force of nature's law,
Unwillingly, unwittingly, scourged on :
And like the oyster wins his precious pearl
From fierce necessity and goading wrong.

QUEN. What lore is this with which thou win'st me ?

ADEL. I know not truly ; but its end is gained.

QUEN. Ah ! woman's wisdom is the natural fruit
Of the calm soul-depths, undisturbed and still,
Mirroring all the glories of the heavens ;
But from thy rosy lips a music flows,
To linger in my ears and in my heart
When thou art absent, quickens, springs, and grows
To fairest flowers, that feed all appetites
With murmuring melody.

ADEL. I fear that love,
Winning his food forgets his brethren—
Knowledge and Wisdom : these from you I learn.

QUEN. Thou learn ? I teach but what thou teachest me
From out thy full heart and unconscious worth,
Gleaming but with reflected light of thine.
The blackest pool beneath a western sun,
Shines rich and radiant in its borrowed rays ;
And in the solemn stillness of the night,
Reflects the stars in peace and purity ;
'Tis thou art sun and stars and all to me.

ADEL. Flatter me not ; it is an empty art
To win chill vanity ; speak not of me :
Divided thus, we are but one in soul

QUEN. If thou wilt have it so—
Lifting me to thy level—let us be
Two joyous flowers upon a single stem,
Inhaling mutual sweetness and delight :
Twin stars that roll thro' space in unison,
Each lending light to form a common day :
Twin streams that mingle in a loving flow,
Only distinct in color and diverse,
To feel their oneness as we feel it now,
Bound in the bonds of sacramental love.

ADEL. Yes, dearest ! or two voices blending sweet
In loves own rapturous hymn of holiness ;
When each alone makes altered melody,
But in their union heavenly harmony.
We gathering strength in heart and mind and soul,
Thro' love attain unto the perfect whole.

QUEN. Oh, happy love ! whose sustenance is dreams ;
Thro' them we weigh the world and find it naught—
A mist, a vapor, the deep solemn shade
Of some unseen reality—and feel
Our lives as visions, fleeting forms that fade
Amid the splendors of Eternity.

ADEL. All love is prayer.

- QUEN. Yes, and thanksgiving too !
It is the oldest worship and the best ;
Free from the cramping cords of word and show :
Most deep, most tender, sweetest symbol of
The God we worship !
- ADEL. Now its sweets are ours,
What need we more save for a fuller draught
Of its delights.
- QUEN. It lies beyond that prize I cannot gain !
We need a cloud betwixt us and the stars,
To feel their distance from our mortal clay. (*Bell sounds*)
- ADEL. Hark ! 'tis the hateful bell—I must away.
- QUEN. Hope nothing ! think of nothing ! none shall know
That I have striven, or that I have failed.
Who will you meet again ?—A beaten drudge.
- ADEL. Hush ! did I love thee for thy skill ?
Ah, no ! it was thy noble self I loved ;
And king or churl, blacksmith or emperor,
It cannot change or pass away from thee.
- QUEN. Still my sweet angel ! then what need we fear,
Armed 'gainst all fortunes fitful miseries,
In the celestial armor of our love.
Thou art my prize, and having thee I wish
No other laurel, thou the only crown. (*they kiss and part*)

SCENE V.

*The Square of Antwerp—Town Hall at back with Balcony—
Soldiers guarding it—Crowd entering and passing.*

Enter DYKVORT, ROERBACH, and CHARLES.

DYK. Keep up your courage Phillip, when they crown you.
You'll dine with me to-day ; oh ! we'll have a festival. I have
been your true friend ; have I not given you money, clothes,
materials, all for the love of my old playfellow ?

CHAS. You'll be the greatest man in Antwerp to-night.

PHIL. Recollect that there are scores of others as old as
myself, all the country people swear by Libert ; then there are
the two French brothers, the best in our own land, and a whole
host of Germans, besides our own craftsmen.

DYK. Never fear ! there's none like you ; recollect what a
master I've been to you, no master, eh ! but a friend, eh ! Oh !
what sport we'll have ; your wife shall dress like a princess,
and your children have jewels for toys, ho ! ho !

Enter QUENTIN and FRANZ.

DYK. What !. Quentin ! you here : why are you not at your
work ?

QUEN. It is a holiday.

DYK. Holiday ! its nothing but holidays. When I was a

young man we were schooled better, did our work, and never thought of holidays.

FRANZ. Yes! and you are a fine example of the result of the method.

DYK. What! ho; who's that saucy youngster?

CHAS. A friend of Quentin's.

DYK. Good Lord! look you sirrah! I like not your fine manners, your books, and your friends. You are too proud for me, too proud!

QUEN. Well?

DYK. Well! I say I like it not sir, I like it not.

QUEN. Well?

DYK. I-I-I—the impertinent scoundrel. (*turning off*)

PHIL. They're a pair of scamps.

Enter VISCONTI.

QUEN. What think you of this sight, sir?

VIS. 'Tis very fine.

QUEN. You miss your climate and its colour tho'?

VIS. (*going up*) Yes.—this fellow is too friendly.

QUEN. The stranger flies higher than we?

FRANZ. So do feathers. (*students approach*)

1st STUD. Ah! Quentin, you were right; Cicero's phrase is as you said.

2nd STUD. And Jerome's tearing his hair to think there's a better Latin scholar than he in Antwerp.

QUEN. And the books?

3rd STUD. Await you now; the price we agreed.

QUEN. 'Tis well; though you must give me some time as my funds are somewhat impoverished.

FRANZ. I bought two books to-day for a mere song I'll lend you.

QUEN. Franz! Franz! I'll never look at one of yours; I know for whom you buy them.

Enter ADELAIDE, HER FATHER, ISABEL and DYKVORT.

QUEN. By heaven's! there's Adelaide and her Father.

FRANZ. There's that infernal Dykvort with Isabel.

QUEN. Ah! I thought you had a tenderness there.

FRANZ. What am I?

QUEN. You are a gentleman and she is a lady; Adelaide is a painter's daughter and I a blacksmith.

FRANZ. See, they come! calm yourself.

The soldiers appear, and on the balcony the Nobles, &c. in their robes.

CRIER. Silence! silence!

QUEN. Oh! how my heart beats in my bitter breast;

A fire is flashing thro' my fevered veins.

Hark! how the people's noise is dying now,

Like a great monster drawing in its breath,

Or ocean settling in a moaning calm,

While silence and the night creep o'er the sea.

DUKE (*advances—Trumpet and shouts of silence*)
 We, the Nobles and Council of Antwerp, after just examination
 and comparison, do decree with single and unanimous voice
 the Ring, and Robe, and Title of first Artisan of Antwerp, to

QUENTIN MASSYS.

*Immense cheers.—He is hurried up the steps, robed and crowned.
 Led forward—Triumphal March and Cheering.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

*A Banquet Hall—QUENTIN richly dressed—VISCONTI, CHARLES,
 STUDENTS, Etc., Etc.*

1st STUD. Well! this is wonderful! who would have thought
 a dreamer, like Quentin, ever could have arisen thus.

2nd STUD. He hears it bravely.

3rd STUD. Aye! he need do that; his name's on every
 tongue; last night he dined with the Duke, where they say, he
 astonished them all by his manners and his learning.

1st STUD. There never was such a success.

VIS. And what said the Duchess to your bold request?

QUEN. Oh! only turned to her ladies and laughed.

CHAS. Were you not frightened?

QUEN. What of?

CHAS. Of all those great people!

QUEN. Why! a little tinsel does not make much difference;
 it is prettier, but in no way more perfect than plain metal.

CHAS. Phillip raves about his defeat.

QUEN. Will he be here to-night?

CHAS. Oh no! the fool only cursed, and went his way when
 I asked him. I hear that Mortelai is ruined by his failure.

Enter FRANZ.

FRANZ. Forgive me Quentin, for coming late, but I was de-
 tained by a sad scene; that young fellow you liked so much,
 the widow's son, has hung himself in despair; he too, it seems,
 was a competitor.

QUEN. Peace! peace! oh will you make me curse my triumph!
 What can I win who work such deadly ill?

Losing my fellows love, the only thing

To be desired in this most empty world.

CHAS. What storm is this sprung from our summer air?

QUEN. Clouds lie in solution in the clearest sky;

So do our passions; natural results

Of blameless causes: both are mystic veils.

The invisible is real as the seen;

'Tis we are faulty deeming ignorance,
 Test of existence.
 A moment, I am weary.

CHAS. Hear him ! he, weary !
 The Pride of Antwerp, and the Flower of Toil ;
 Whose name resounds from every passer's tongue,
 Whose doors are thronged with rich and high and titled ;
 Whose banquet waits him, girdled by his friends,
 Is weary ! Heavens ! what can'st thou have done ?

QUEN. I've won the crown all strove for.

CHAS. Some one must win, and some be vanquished,
 Wherefore grieve at this ?

QUEN. It is a bitter truth and none the less,
 Because it flows from our necessity.
 Yes ! I could almost wish this ring unwon,
 To have no thought of guilt upon my soul.

CHAS. Guilt ! thou art mad to slur thy great success.

QUEN. Success ! Success ! it is a gilded lie,
 A stench of corpses, or a vulture's croak,
 The paradise of fools, a painted quean,
 That flings herself alike on good or ill,
 To drag them downward to a deeper hell.

FRANZ. (*approaching*)

Quentin ! your guests await you ; cheer yourself.

QUEN. I will be calm, and turn to faith for help ;
 But good and evil are so bound within
 Each others being, that we scarce can see
 If Earth ~~be~~ Hell, or Heaven—It is either,
 According as we frame it to ourselves.

FRANZ. Come then, old fellow, for our comrades wait.

QUEN. Such is man's joy—to banquet, while without,
 That corpse is swinging, and the mother starves ;
 But that, thank God, I can prevent. 'Tis gone,
 The backward swing, that surely follows on
 My triumph. Now, to please them, and forget
 That there is such a things as joy's regret.

(*He goes up, all seat themselves, he at the head of the table.*)

QUEN. Come, comrades ! fill your glasses to the brim ;
 Cast off restraint, and let no memory
 Of the outer working world, obtrude itself,
 Upon our joys. Fill high, with varied glow,
 And let the gladsome jest, from lip to lip,
 Sparkle in laughter ; cast aside all bonds
 Of custom, free the soul and let it live
 In youthful freedom, flushed and passionate.

Ho ! let Music sound ! (*Music*)
 Swelling and rising in voluptuous stream,
 Until it drowns us in its witchery,
 And thro' the eager cars in ripples falls
 Upon the melting heart. Come, raise the song,

And let the chorus and the bold refrain,
 Ring from the rafters. Rise ! rise up, my friends ;
 Wave high your goblets as our thoughts ascend ;
 Drink, we, to Pleasure ! Now, another draught ;
 Drink, we, to Friendship ! Yet the highest, now
 Drink, each, to her he loves ! No other thought
 This cup shall desecrate. To her I love !

(Drinks—flings the goblet over his head)

Chorus—Music swells up.

SCENE II.

A room in Van Tuyl's house Enter ADELAIDE and ISABEL

ISA. He is, indeed, a gallant, worthy thee,
 So handsome, now so great ; ah ! would that I
 Had such another : how I'd make him kneel
 With trembling pulse, and when he'd kiss me sweet,
 At my temptation, I would frown and stamp
 At such impertinence ! such insolence !
 And then such meetings ! A fig for all control.
 Who'd blush behind a mother's apron strings,
 And pout out, " Yes," or " No," as one was told,
 While father strokes his beard, and meditates
 Upon the income of his chosen friend ?

ADEL. You ! but, we milder maidens, must submit
 More patiently.

ISA. The " milder maidens," they,
 With downcast eyes, the gently throbbing breast,
 The slow forgetful glance, and clinging hand,
 That draw them near and nearer to their doom.
 The modest face that meets the father's eye
 Unblushing, while the little heart is plotting
 Meetings, and partings, and all traitorous things.

ADEL. Well, have your way,
 But, for the present, I must play the part
 You give your suitor, silently submit,
 To all your merriment devises.

ISA. Oh ! you need never fear for your success :
 His fame is spread like lightning, and he stands
 Upon a pinnacle of victory.
 Riches and titles will soon shower on him ;
 A brilliant match tho' for a noble's child.

ADEL. You do not know my father ; the world's idols
 Are nothing unto him. He never knew
 Their noisy shrines : Art is the one pursuit
 That wins his reverence ; and rightly too.

ISA. But then thy lover ?

ADEL. He, is an Artist.
 His thoughts, thro' symbols, reaching to men's hearts,

Clothed in the Beautiful. Delight and Blessing
Showered with single hand from Nature's Heaven,
Firing the better part of those who see,
To deeds as glorious.

ISA. But Wealth, and Rank;
And Power are, in their sum the end, which all
Weak mortals hunger for.

ADEL. They are poor butterflies, that feed amongst
The weblike branches of a blighted tree,
Bearing a poisonous flower, that soon or late,
Will prove their doom.

ISA. There, I'll not argue it,
Your father's teaching has unwoman'd you.

ADEL. Hath freed me rather from the thready net
That makes a scoff and scorn of womanhood,
Drowning the soul, that finds its life thro' it,
To little sips among the lees of life.
Small thoughts, small deeds, small being, only free
On the meanest side, the hot house; not in the air.

ISA. This grows worse and worse;
Will you obey your father, should he forbid
Your lover's suit?

ADEL. I must, and yet I falter: 'tis so hard
To cast away the jewels of the soul,
And live for evermore in poverty.
The slave of love, he draws me and he stays me;
In either plight I rend some vital chord,
And mar his music; but it must be so.

ISA. Get married first, then ask your father's leave:
Come, that is certain.

ADEL. No! I could not leave him,
Or even deceive him. And then Quentin, ah!
I remember our first meeting. 'Twas a stormy eve,
As after matins nurse, and I returning
Were by a reeling reveller pursued;
But as his hand was stretched to seize my cloak,
There came a flash, and then a leaping form,
The drunkard fell, and there he stood erect,
His eyes ablaze with a great light of wrath,
Like young Achilles, o'er the Trojan dead.
And when they softened and met mine, I felt
A sudden quiver, as my maiden heart
Awakened from its nest, and fluttered, till
His sought it out and made a mutual home.

ISA. Well, I must leave you now, sure of success;
But if you fail, rely on me to aid you
With my experience

ADEL. Of Franz? there, there,
It is to-day he said he would attempt it;
God grant him aid to gain it. Let my father
Hear his sweet voice as I do, and all's well. *Exit BOTH.*

SCENE III.

A fine room filled with people entering and leaving.

FRANZ, CHARLES, and DYKVORT.

QUEN. (*solus*) Success is but a bauble after all,
We can win nothing, in a greater height,
Save vision of a wider sphere beyond ;
While failure is the deadly serpent's sting,
That drives to madness ; once the thrill is past,
Of gratified desire, we do not feel
Our triumph ; it is faded and forgot,
Tho' from afar it gleamed, or seemed to gleam,
With promises of happiness and rest.
So I, but yesterday an unknown boy,
Am borne upon the wings of fame, afar
O'er my old friends. I am no more to-day
Than yesternorn, but oh, how different ;
The man who bares his merit to the mob,
Or who contains its treasures in himself.
But then, they passed me, wronged and slighted me,
While now they throng my doors with prayer and praise,
As if their weakness were a joy to me.

FRANZ. Quentin ! here are a number of worthy men who will
not be content, unless they see you about their business.

QUEN. Well, I owe them thanks. (*goes up*)

DYK. Wonderful ! wonderful ! Lords and Lackeys, Merchants
and Doctors, all attending him.

CHAS. That is the French Envoy, deputations from three cities
wait him, while nobles jostle each other for a word of his.
The people are all mad about him. They're selling whole
foundries of Iron about the streets, as his work.

DYK. (*chuckling*) Good fellows, good fellows ! that was my
idea. Did they cry it well ?

CHAS. All over the town.

DYK. I shall not have a scrap left in all my stores.

QUEN. Gentlemen, I am much beholden to you, but must now
retire. For all who choose, there is food and drink, with-
out which, if it be not of the best or you lack servants, let
me know, and it shall soon be remedied.

ALL. Hurrah ! hurrah ! long life and happiness to your grace

Exit ALL.

QUEN. Franz, thou art true amidst the hypocrisy,
The adulation, fawning, false, and fierce ;
Thou, I cannot repay, for all I have
Is not an atom to my steadfast love.

FRANZ. Quentin, you make a woman of me ; speak as you
speak to me, to that old dragon, and your sure of your fair
Hesperides.

QUEN. You have not forgotten the widow's son and the others?

FRANZ. They bless your name.

QUEN. Ah! if I but gain that one fair prize,
Then thou and Isabel should join, and all
In rapturous gladness pass the happy years.
Unnumbered books, and leisure, and sweet toil,
Strong, fresh from the soul depths, surmounting all
Beneath the benediction of our love.

FRANZ. Fear not but enter in, success is certain;
And I will meet you, the accepted lover!

Exit FRANZ.

CHAS. Mark old Dykvort, cringing and waiting! now you can
retaliate on him for all his insolence to you,

QUEN. Then were I baser still. Well, Mynheer Dykvort?

DYK. (*bowing*) My lord! your grace! your orders are obeyed,
and I wait your further pleasure at your earliest ease.

QUEN. "My earliest ease,"—this is the difference
Of tone, that marks the difference of rank.
I'll see to it, but do not overwork
My old friends for me, let the people wait.
I pray you see that all know of the banquet
In the square to-day.

DYK. It shall be done my lord.

Enter LACKEY.

SERVANT. My lord, some lackeys wait you from Bruges and its
Council, from Ghent and others, that I know not.

QUEN. See that they are plentifully provided for; I will attend
them anon.

DYK. (*aside*) Heavens! what fortune; plague on it, I'll go and
dine with these fellows. I like not lackeys, but the food
and drink are splendid. I will not longer intrude upon
your grace, but hasten to fulfil your commands on the
instant.

Exit DYKVORT.

QUEN. Well Charles, did you get your post?

CHAS. I cannot speak my humble gratitude and service.

QUEN. Gratitude! we'll have fine names for loving one's
parent's next: but I must leave you; consider yourself
master here, and play the host for me. *Exit QUENTIN.*

CHAS. Oh, that I were thus exalted, how I would lord it; they
should eat the dust I trod on, and fly to my slightest wish.
Rings, robes, and splendour.—But let me seize this chance.
Ho, fellow! fellow, I say!

Enter SERVANT,

CHAS. (*flinging himself into a chair*) Bring me some wine, and
send those lackeys here.

SCÈNE IV.

Enter ISABEL and FRÄNZ.

FRANZ. You are early abroad?

ISA. Do you take me for an owl?

FRANZ. Owls say little.

ISA. And are not understood.

FRANZ. Whoever understood a woman? we get entangled in a labyrinth of outward graces, we never reach the true kernel, unless like many women, it lies all on the outside.

ISA. You grow sentimental, but your sting shows.

FRANZ. I am as tender as a young rooster.

ISA. And have as many dames.

FRANZ. I am as constant as a tight shoe.

ISA. Or a creaking gate.

FRANZ. Nay ! let me liken it to a woman's love for herself, or her contempt for her sisters ; a burghesses love for his land ; a bad name for a wise man, or a dignity for a fool ; a wife's ill temper ; or a beggar's hunger—

ISA. Mercy! mercy! I am needed home.

FRANZ. I follow, as certainly as a dog his master, an old husband a young wife, or my creditors my unfortunate self.

Exit.

SCENE V.

A Room in Van Tulyt's House.

QUEN. I pray you, sir, to listen to my suit,
I only ask a hope, an empty hope,
That patience, thro' hard trial, may o'erstep,
Tho' still unworthy.

VAN TUYLT. It may not be sir, I reject your suit,
My daughter's heart is yet unstained, and pure
In its virginity. I shall not mar it.

QUEN. It is no light thing that you shatter thus,
No fleeting fancy born of lust or pride,
It holds my heart and honor ; all my soul,
Loves her beyond itself.

VAN T. It maddens me.
What right have you to talk of love or hope,
To think of her?

QUEN. The right of every man
To honor what is Pure, seek what is Good,
Love what is Beautiful.
Alas for us, if we could only win
Equality's poor prize ; if such the bands,
How could we lift our souls in love to God.

The meanest thing that lives, howe'er debased.
In love and reverence can consecrate,
And bless the noblest by this offering ;
It pleases Him in Heaven.

VAN T. But if I grant this right it gives no claim,
Love then and depart.

QUEN. Sir, have you ever loved,
Have you e'er felt that earth were dark without
One cherished form ; have you e'er counted hours
That stood between you and one fadeless face ;
Has all the Breath and Beauty beneath heaven,
Filled one sweet altar ; hast thou ever known
Peace only in one presence, of delight
And exaltation ; every word a creed,
Each look a revelation, fresh from heaven ;
Have you e'er loved, and say to me depart.

VAN T. (*aside*) 'Tis nobly spoken—But I love my daughter
Too well, to grant her to a laborer.

QUEN. And what of that ?
The dignity of labor is above
The empty crowns of princes ; it is all
That moves, sustains the world ; it is the first
Great duty of the man, his noblest crown.
The idle are the clogs upon the race,
And spite of gilded robes are parasites,
That suck their worthless lives from out its strength,
The only guide that leads to Truth and Right.

VAN T. But there are grades, and to a laborer
In Art, I give her hand.

QUEN. Then mine is art,
Since it creates, from massive matter, shapes
Of everlasting beauty and delight ;
Alive thro' mingling of the soul with soil.

VAN T. Thine Art ! to twist the filthy ragged iron
To uncouth shapes, void of all purity,
All color, harsh, and hateful, imagery !

QUEN. Art is the offering of the soul to God ;
As likest him in it, it is the prayer
That springs from a pure heart and noble mind,
Stretching faint hands of fond imagination,
In dim, dumb passion, thro' the outer dark,
That bounds the throne of the Great Mystery ;
And reaching thence, the fruit angelical
Sows its sweets seeds among men's hungry minds,
To flower in Goodness, Happiness, and Love.
The aim, the joy of God to bring to life,
New children of that Beauty that pervades
Thro' man and nature, all Eternity.
And to its votary if still sincere,
Whether with chisel, hammer, pen, or brush,
It matters not, it then reveals itself,

Magnificent, Divine, Eternal, Pure ;
 Lifting him to its Power and its Peace,
 Led like the Babes of old to His dear feet.

VAN T. These idle words fly by me undisturbed ;
 Thinkest thou, I'll yield my houses, hope, and joy,
 My cherished heartsease unto thee ?

QUEN. I did not dream it.

Remember, I asked little.

VAN T. Little ! what ! little
 To be a blacksmith's drudge, a workman's slave !

QUEN. I ask you here sir, for your daughter's hand,
 Whom, Heaven be witness, I love more than life,
 Upon my dignity as man to man,
 Artist to artist ; but if thy desire
 Be Rank or Riches, name it ; and for her,
 I'll win it or lose all.

VAN T. I scorn such toys,
 As I do thine.

QUEN. Think not I undervalue her, oh no !
 She is a star, far, far above my sphere,
 A priceless treasure ; 'tis for this I love,
 And fain would win her.

VAN T. Her love ! thou fool ;
 Poor, pitiful, weak drone, outrageous madman ;
 She love thee !—pah.

ADEL. (*rushing in*) He is my love :
 I cannot listen longer father, grant
 His prayer and mine, for they are one indeed ;
 He has my heart, and justice claims my tongue.

QUEN. My dearest love !

VAN T. (*staggering*) What said she ! Love him !

ADEL. Come Quentin, let us kneel. (*they kneel*)
 Forgive us father, and grant our one prayer.

VAN T. Oh, has it come to this, willing away
 Her fresh young innocence, and thus deceiving
 Her fool fond father.

ADEL. Father, you do him wrong.

VAN T. Oh, I shall suffocate ; perfidious wretch !
 Seducer ; get thee hence !

ADEL. Dear father, listen.

VAN T. Silence ! foolish girl ; let me but reach him.
 Draw, thou coward, draw.

ADEL. Quentin, forgive him.

QUEN. I would not harm him for the world, my love.

VAN T. Go to thy room ! leave me to deal with him.
 Your room, I say ! no words, my last command ;
 Go thou and leave us girl.

ADEL. There is no hope ;
 Then modesty, farewell. You are unjust,
 And must strike thro' me if you strike at all :
 My actions, and my life, you may command,

But not my love, for that is his alone,
And will be ever, tho' we part for aye.
Quentin, within this breast you reign alone,
Its cherished Lord.

ADEL. (*kissing her hand*) Thanks, thanks, my noble love.

VAN T. Oh misery! away! draw, traitor, draw.

QUEN. Dear father, I love you, you gave me all;

Ad. And tho' you banish him, and ruin me,
My duty still shall find me by thy side,
In storm and sunshine, thankful and obedient:
All else is his.

Him, whom you have so slandered,—hear me Heaven—
I swear that never man shall touch this hand,
Or press these lips in love, or hold my heart,
Save thee dear Quentin; sacred unto thee,
I dedicate my virgin faith till death.

QUEN. My peerless darling; thou art an angel.

VAN T. My only daughter? then I too will swear:

Hear thou, false, headstrong, girl,
Thou never shall be wooed or won by man,
Or know a lover's face, or word, or kiss,
Save he be one of those who give,—oh God!—
Thee back a glorious mirror of thy grace,
A master of my art, excelling me,
And this I swear, by Him in Heaven above.

ADELAIDE (*clings to him crying*) Father! father!

QUEN. Then take my oath, ye sacred Powers of Truth,
And register with hers, an equal vow
Of Love, and Faith, unalterably pure,
Gainst thee, old man.

I stake the other, and here swear to give,
My Life, my hope, my honor, and my toil,
Of brain and hand, till I fulfil thy words,
And either win the height that wins me her,
Or perish in the attempt. Earth holds for me
Only one paradise; if I miss that,
The rest is nothingness.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

A Room—Music—QUENTIN sitting.

Enter SERVANT.

QUEN. I must not be disturbed, whoever comes,
No one can see me. *Exit SERVANT.*

So fades my dream, and here I stand, bereft
 By all that yesterday transfigured me ;
 The fruits of toil, the fiery flushed success,
 The fame that followed, and the future fair,
 Gone at a blow. I stand again alone
 In nakedness, the mandate has gone forth,
 A fiery sword bars up my paradise,
 And I must out into the weary world,
 With only memory to feed regret,
 To earn salvation by the sweat of the brow.
 I must discrown myself, cast off these robes,
 And so outface my failure ;
 For failure may be grander than **success**.
 There is no failure to the **aspiring mind**,
 The attempt is victory ; and I have love,
 The noblest love on earth.
 Oh art ! thou God of Glory shine on me,
 Grant I may win, thro' thee, those rarest treasures,
 Which neither moth nor rust can e'er corrupt,
 The only treasures, Love and Righteousness.
 All else is dross, the spirits wealth is wasted,
 Save in that lovelier life, that disregards
 The earthly mists of choking circumstance,
 For higher atmospheres that cannot change,
 But woo its blossoms in eternal spring,
 With summer splendor and autumnal fruit.
 My soul is up in arms within my breast,
 To answer fortune's challenge—I am free—
 Farewell, to all that chains me to the dust,
 The empty baubles that o'erweight our wings ;
 The thought of thee, my darling, lends me light.
 To soar far upward on a nobler flight,
 Defying clinging cares, and fate's fierce spite.
 I'll live, the votary of Love and Art,
 The twin interpreters of God to Man.

SCENE II.

Street in Antwerp—DYKVORT and PHILLIP ROERBACH.

DYK. You are all alike ; work never, but beg often.

PHIL. You know how I slaved ; I should have had the prize,
 my work was better than that young springalds.

DYK. Tush ! he is a genius, and you are a fool.

PHIL. And yet you praised me, and spurned him.

DYK. Silence ! or I'll sue you for the other monies you owe me.

PHIL. Why, you have already seized my house and goods, and
 turned me into the street.

DYK. I shall never get half I lent you.

PHIL. But my children, we have no food.

DYK. Is that my care?

PHIL. For eighteen years I've served you honestly,
Toiled for you earnestly, and watched your interests
Before mine own, and even now, at last,
Was ruined in your service.

DYK. You had your wages.

PHIL. I say no more,
I know you now, and after twenty years.
My little children starve for want of that
You fling your dogs!
I am a man, and thou seemedst man, how then,
With justice, can you see me destitute,
Altho' your bitterest foe? I, once your friend!
Your faithful servant! and you give me—Wages!

DYK. Away! you have no claim on me.

PHIL. Great God! no claim; nor on a friend, nor brother,
Nor any man, tho' needing such a little.

Enter QUENTIN.

DYK. Hush! hush!

PHIL. Neither hast thou a claim, thou paltry wretch,
On that Almighty Power that let's thee live;
Despite thy evil heart and slanderous tongue,
I'd rather die, and lie a curse upon thee,
Than take thy gold; and live in hell for ever,
Than have thy riches, and thy cruel soul.

DYK. Hush! you shall have it.

PHIL. Out toad, and bloodsucker? there, touch me not,
For there is still some manhood in my veins,
Starvation hath not sapped, and you shall have it.

QUEN. Why Roerbach, what means this?

DYK. Only a little tiff.

PHIL. Away with you!
Sir, I was drunk with pride, and wasted all
I had, to win the prize you justly wear.
This man, my friend and master for long years,
Fawned on and flattered me, and lent me gold,
Spurring me to the contest.
An hour within your triumph, he seized home,
And all I had, and cast us out by night
To starve like dogs, disdained and disregarded.

QUEN. Where are they? for God's sake haste,
And let us to them.

PHIL. I do not deserve it, I slandered you.

QUEN. Come, you shall not deny me; I need a man
Of your experience. You favor me
If you will serve me, 'tis not charity.

PHIL. How can I thank you,—my children,
my wife—and you so rich.

QUEN. Why, this is the only good of riches; for no virtue
Lies in the metal, 'tis the way we use it.

PHIL. I thank God, you are fortunate and happy.

QUEN. Fortunate and happy?

Ah! so I seem, environed by success.

Eat not of the tree of knowledge, for it turns

To ashes in the teeth. Give me thy hand;

And if I win thy friendship, oh, believe me,

It is the richest jewel I have gained,

So fortunate and happy!

PHIL. (*giving him his hand*) I am yours till death. *Exit BOTH.*

DYK. That fool Quentin, is sure to give him all he needs; I'll hasten and put another execution on him; he showers his gold about like rain, and I'll stand in the shower.

Enter CHARLES.

CHAS. Have you seen Quentin, to-day?

DYK. But now he left me.

CHAS. Something's happened; he could not be found last

night, but I have some good news for him. More honors.

DYK. Well, it's as well to be in the way, I'll come with you.

Exit BOTH.

SCENE III.

A Room in Van Tuyt's House.

VAN TUYLT, ADELAIDE, and ISABEL.

VAN T. And, for that vain and braggadocio boy,

Breathe not his name, I will not hear of it;

You are too young to mix with the wild wolves,

That roam beyond your fold.

ADEL. I would make plain our meaning, for the last time,

I pray you let me tell it.

VAN T. No, not a word of it;

Bind it deep down within your stubborn breast,

And if you cannot kill it, keep it from my sight:

It shall not wound me twice.

ADEL. Ah! that I trust;

Yet will I hide no corner from thine eye,

But ask your leave to see him once again,

But once, e'er he departs, with your consent.

VAN T. Go, child; forgive your father, and perceive

His faith who sends thee to that tiger's den,

Such is my trust in thee; but recollect,

I've sworn to heaven, and cannot break my oath.

Exit VAN TUYLT.

ISA. Come Adelaide, cast off this silent grief;

Could you not sob and ease your laboring heart,

And this pent sorrow?

ADEL.

Silence best befits

A mourner.

ISA. Is there no hope ?

ADEL. Have you not heard it all ?

ISA. And Love, is that too fled ?

ADEL. No ! that alone remains,
 But all its food, and pleasure, hope, and joy,
 Communion passionate, and sight, and touch
 Go down into the darkness, all unknown ;
 Like little insects we are fluttering low,
 About the bosom of a surging sea,
 Whose hungry tongues in ceaseless wrath uprising,
 Suck in whole multitudes, yet makes no sign,
 But gapes insatiable, and smacks its lips,
 Grinding its rocky teeth in a hoarse glee.

ISA. There, that has roused you.

ADEL. The fitful flickering of a fading flame.

ISA. Brood not so on thy sorrow,

ADEL. I brood, but 'tis above a lonely nest,
 And on a cuckoo's eggs with frantic fear,
 And sad self-torment. Let me give them life,
 For I must ease the mother's heart within,
 Tho' they breed vipers, and sting swift and sore.

ISA. And your are resolute to keep your oath ?

ADEL. There is no other way, no other light,
 He is the world to me, the road to him
 My only thought, my single aim and hope ;
 I could as soon
 Outspeed my shadow on a sunny day,
 Or grasp my image in a running brook,
 Live without breath, or sleep with unclosed eyes,
 As know another, or a weaker love.

ISA. I fear your Constancy will find scanty fare
 To feed upon.

ADEL. You call it Constancy !

Then what is Love ? is there another word,
 To image forth our being, and is Love
 The creature of a moment, fed upon
 The fruits of Constancy ? I know no such
 Love is enough to rule all living souls,
 Love is enough to outlast hoary time,
 Love is enough to win or lose a world,
 I love, and know no thing called Constancy.

ISA. Yes, this is Love indeed, and Loves fine ecstasy ;
 Would I had such a lover, and a love.

ADEL. Here, comes my nurse, a letter in her hand,
 From Quentin ? Oh, God ! grant it. (*rushes out*)

ISA. And this is love, oh happy, happy love,
 What is there in all Time to threaten it ?
 So Pure, so Noble, Blessed, and Divine,
 Oh Love, sweet Love, would that thou too were mine. *Exit*

SCENE IV.

A Room in Quentin's House.

QUENTIN, FRANZ, VISCONTI, CHARLES, DYKVORT, and PHILLIP.

DYK. Oh, sainted Virgin ! this is hopeless madness.

FRANZ. Come, courage, you may conquer and soon win
Another crown in Art.

QUEN. No man can win such crown,
Save he have gifts, so diverse, and so great,
They'd honor gods ; he must be strong and pure
In every faculty the mind possesses,
To feel, to reason, to perceive ; must base
Himself upon a monument of knowledge.
Then all is worthless save he own that power,
The Genius, god-given, moulding all
To harmony, and helpful perfectness.
All thoughts, all virtues, leave their impress there,
The maker's heart, the mirror that reflects,
Thro' fleck and flaw and its imperfectness,
The stainless radiance of divinity.

FRANZ. Surely you overrate it, in some years
You may surmount its dangers.

QUEN. How long may patience set herself to win
A crown in Art ?

VIS. Life is not long enough, tho' given to it
From the infant's cradle, to the old man's grave.
Infinity lies open to Creation,
Unto the Power that can overrule it.

QUEN. Yet, since this higher goal,
Impossible, erects itself before
The eyes of men, is there no hope that I
May reach some low low height ?

VIS. But little ! for the few that compass it,
Must, giving up the race against the gods,
Run in their fetters gainst their noblest kind,

QUEN. I knew its grandeur but not its despair,
Your words chill all my veins like winter's wind,
My hopes dissolve like snow. Is there no chance,
Of some small pitiful success ?

VIS. Not without Genius.

QUEN. Oh ! what art thou mysterious power, that makes
Man thy poor tool, and earth thy careless toy ?
Where is thy palace, by what bolts, and bars,
Or horrors is it guarded ? Show the way !
And tho' it lead by Cerberus, and Styx,
Or foul Gehenna, I will dare descend.
Poor fool ! it is in Heaven, unattainable,
Given, not conquered !

This is the Almighty's mandate to mankind,
 To each the appointed place, and what we have,
 We have for ever; what we have not, that
 We never can obtain. My only hope,
 Oh God! is in my Ignorance, that perchance,
 Beneath the stubble that offends mine eye,
 Some seeds of His great harvest hidden lie,
 And I must search, and will, until I find,
 Tho' I run Ruin's plough thro' all my mind.
 But you still hold your word, that I may now
 Accompany you?

VIS. I do, tho' warning you
 Of a life wasted, youth dissolved away,
 And certain failure.

QUEN. I am prepared.

FRANZ. Quentin, I fear the trial.

QUEN. Fear it not!

Defeat, if Fate so wills it, falls upon
 One, who hath neither Kindred, Hopes, nor Fears,
 And falling on this armor, e'en as one
 That stabs the dead, it works no further ill,
 Save some few clotted drops of resignation.

FRANZ. Speak not so sadly, you are young and brave,
 And filled with fierce Desire.

QUEN. My trusty friend,
 If such were Lord of power, all men were gods,
 And earth itself a rival Paradise.

FRANZ. Oh, rouse thy Hope.

QUEN. Hope! what means such a word to those who stand,
 By the graveside, or the stiff silent corpse?
 Hope! what is Hope but blossom of the spring,
 Killed by the winter's chill, a fruit that rots,
 A flower that fades, a wave that glides away,
 The mist of youthful morning that departs
 From Life's dry desert; Dew drunk by Time's Sun,
 From Heart Cups, left at last to parch and wither.
 Hope is but mortal, changes, passes, dies,
 Knows more than human ills, sinks at a breath,
 Perishes in its glory,—but Despair,
 And Doubt live on, Eternal Vultures preying
 On half-fledged Hopes of Youth, or carrion Age,
 The little insect wings that bear our Souls.

CHAS. Listen to reason, Quentin.

QUEN. Willingly.

CHAS. What are you leaving?

QUEN. All things that I love.

PHIL. And why go you?

QUEN. To win Love!

CHAS. And what is Love?

QUEN. The soul of God!
 The Mother of Mankind, my Life.

VIS. You leave your home, and all, perhaps for ever.

QUEN. My home is where my conscience beckons me.

CHAS. You waste the talents God has given you.

QUEN. Nay, they are strengthened in their higher uses.

FRANZ. You may not conquer.

QUEN. But I cannot fail.

PHIL. It is so hard, this task you set yourself.

QUEN. Nothing that's worthy can be won without
Patience, and toil, and some self-sacrifice.

CHAS. If you succeed you win a paltry thing.

QUEN. I win the noblest prize that earth can give,
Or Heaven bestow, a loving human heart.

DYK. Pish, for such cobwebs; look at your new wealth,
You can buy a score such in the market place;
The city's at your feet.

QUEN. Let them arise unto their proper state;
I go my way.

DYK. Well, the market's gluttoned, but I'll offer
you a high figure for your Designs.

QUEN. Agreed! I shall not want much, the rest, my Friends,
is yours.

VIS. It seems to me,
Infatuation, beyond poets dream,
To fling away the substance of thy glory
For such a shadow.

QUEN. Nay, glory is the shadow,
From true merit.

FRANZ. You leave me now alone.

QUEN. Alone, dear Franz!
Still in your native land, and in the sight
Of all your childhood's memories, with firm friends
Around you, and the face you love
Beside you often.
To have high hopes, fair future, and desires
Still living, to know gladness and calm rest,
Thou art not then alone.
But all these things I leave, and more of grief
I struggle gainst, but I have memory,
And Love, and am not yet alone.

FRANZ. Quentin, you shame me.

CHAS. No man of us has ever reached your height,
So young and yet so great,

QUEN. And would you make
The Good I have, the limit of my life,
Blotting all else from its aspiring Heaven,
To blacken into evil the Sun set,
That gave it Life and Being? No! no deed
Of mine shall set its seal upon my soul's
O'erflowing waters, dammed to black oblivion,
And foul Stagnation. Spirits cannot stay
Upon, or near, the Lethe wave untainted,

Treading Fate's quicksands, Rest or Hesitation
 Engulphs them into suffocation dread.
 Soul-Life is Action, — Motion anywhere,—
 Downward to Darkness, and benumbed Death
 Upward to Light and Immortality. (*goes towards the door*)

CHAS. One moment more,
 I do abjure you, pause a little while,
 See what you leave by your impatient wrath,
 Wealth, without limit, Honor, crowned and robed,
 Ambition, freed for flight, Pride, lifted up,
 Power within your grasp, a wondrous lot,
 Regal in its magnificence.

FRANZ. Consider, Quentin.

PHIL. Tarry yet a while.

VIS. Act not so madly.

DYK. Come, be a man, and shun this idiocy.

CHAS. Ease, Pleasure, all the fond delights that pour
 Upon Success ; the smiles of other dames,
 More rich, more beautiful.

QUEN. That could not be.

ALL. Oh pause—A day—Failure is certain—Stay.

CHAS. Can no reiteration pierce your ear ?
 You stand within a halo of success,
 Crowned and rejoicing in the sunshine glory.
 Before you lies the Darkness, grim and grey,
 With awful perils. Sorrow and Despair,
 Dim, looming up in smoke of sacrifice.
 Look at your present and the future gloom ;
 Can neither Fame or Friendship, Fortune or Ambition,
 Keep you from this dread deed.

QUEN. No. never !

Tho' this were Arcady, or Eden fair,
 And that the Lightning's home Cimmerian,
 Shrill with its shriek, and the reverberation
 Of ceaseless thunder ; its wild blaze enclosing
 Gulfs, Precipices, Horrors, of all Hell.
 The lurid flashes, playing with the hairs
 Of heaped up corpses, twining round the ruins
 Of rocking Babel, with its summit riven,
 Up there amid the strife perpetual,
 Of blazing Meteors, and of raining blood,
 I'd climb it spite of all. My way lies on.

(*rushes out—a short silence*)

FRANZ. Gone, he is gone ! the noblest, bravest soul
 That lit our hearts ; oh. what is all that others
 Hunger for, to him ; 'tis we are blind,
 Chasing swamp will-o-the-wisps, while he sails on
 Towards the brightness of the Eternal Stars.

VIS. It is a daring deed, would cow a Caesar.

DYK. Yes, a noble youth.

PHIL. Why, even thou art moved

ELLO' and thy callousness, and feel his heart,
In its true majesty awaking wonder,
As clowns stare at a Meteor in the sky,
Whose streaming radiance sends a sudden light
O'er Hill, and Homestead, Flower, Copse, and Sea.
To vanish, leaving us the deepened night.

DYK. Well, you will shine again, now he is gone.

CHAS. Like Stars, the Sun withdrawn.

FRANZ. Oh, fiendish Self! thou Prince of human ills,
We peer from out thy crannies, and defects,
Upon the world, and see its varied shapes,
Disfigured by thy flaws, dimmed by thy dust,
As wide or narrow. Who can know the Truth,
We only see ourselves in what we see,
All else is darkness.

VIS. I must go.

CHAS. Yes, let us see the last of him.

FRANZ. (to VISCONTI) Come Sir, we will accompany you.

DYK. He sold them me, and I shall prosper still,
The daring fool. *Exit ALL.*

SCENE V.

The Cathedral—Organ and Chant breaking in occasionally.

ADELAIDE and QUENTIN.

ADEL. Oh my brave sweet, thy Love o'erpowers me,
My own consumes me, and when thine too burns,
Its violence destroys me.

QUEN. Brave! I looked at thee,
And spoke what I read always in thy face,
"Be True, and Faithful, and there is no Death,
No Sorrow, and no Sin."

ADEL. But we must part.

QUEN. This is not parting, it is but repose,
They cannot part our hearts, and if this form
Space, banish from thine eyes, dismiss its rule;
The Spirit has command o'er Time and Space,
In its full power, and thro' Love our Souls
May hold communion.

ADEL. But then thy awful task.

QUEN. While thus thy vows are ringing in mine ears,
With thy soft kisses sweet upon my lips,
And Art to bless, shall not my toil be pleasure?
Thy peerless loveliness living in my soul,
Pass thro' my fingers to Immortal Life!
If I but catch a fraction of its grace,
My victory is assured.

ADEL. But wherefore, do you sacrifice yourself?
Your hard won laurels. Hope, and Home, and Friends,

For, oh, so slight a thing ! Do you not know
How fickle is the Fortune that you brave,
And you may lose your all ?

QUEN. Shall I lose Love ?
Shall I lose Self-respect, or Faith in God,
Honor, or Truth, or Art ?

ADEL. No one of these.

QUEN. Then I lose nothing, for these are my all.

ADEL. Unhappy Fate ! we might have been so happy.

QUEN. Might have been !
Why what a film it is that thus divides
Our mutual love ; oh, why should we await
His will, he would relent.

ADEL. Oh, never, never !

QUEN. Thus to live so free.

Together every hour, nor know the pang
Of separation, to stand each by each,
Against the shocks of Life, and taste its joys
In common, so to tread the flowery path
That leads to Heaven, in unison of Bliss.

ADEL. I could not leave him lonely in his age,
I am his only stay,—how could I face
My mother in that realm, her charge forsaken ?
Were I unfaithful unto him in this,
How were I faithful unto thee, for naught
Of Sin can live within the bounds of Love. (*chant*)

QUEN. Nay, calm thyself.

ADEL. Do not o'erpower me but give me strength,
For if you will it, how can I deny ?
And yet, I pray thee, aid me to do right ;
As thou art pure thyself, so let me be,
And come to thee unspotted, tho' it is
In Spirit,—not in Flesh. (*chant*)

QUEN. Sweet Adelaide, thy angel purity,
Shames my weak soul, blinded by Light of Love,
You beam a Star, above the darkened mists
Of passion, in a Paradise secure,
I did not dream it.

ADEL. Here, let me rest.

QUEN. My tenderest Monitor, I feel the balm
Of thy sweet spirit penetrating mine,
With joy sublime, and its blest influence
Shall mould me to a shrine for Thee, whercat,
Afar, I'll offer daily orisons.—
My time draws near.

ADEL. Then listen to me now.

I love you Quentin, inexpressibly,
And every day and hour, my thoughts are thine,
While memory weaves thy words and looks into
My heart, until they grow myself, and make
Me all thine own, in body and in soul.

Thou art my Love, and being so, art more
 Than all the world beside, than Life, its toy,
 Thy kiss outweighs a kingdom, thy deceit
 Could not control it ; nobler than all Fates,
 More sacred than my Piety, more blest
 Than any prayer—it is me—all in all. (*chant*)

QUEN. Closer, closer still !

So that the thought of this last kiss shall be,
 Salvation to our severed souls forever.

ADEL. We rise above the noisy world together,
 In joy celestial, the turbid stream
 Of sad mortality, flows far below.
 Say do we live, or have we passed thro' Death,
 Unconsciously upon the wings of love ?
 For Form hath vanished, Sense hath died away,
 And left us soaring upward, soul in soul. (*chant*)

QUEN. Now, ever thro' the future desert of
 Our lonely days, this moment shall stand forth
 An Oasis within the sands of Sorrow.
 Wake, dearest, I must go.

ADEL. Go ? that harsh word
 Brings back to Life since it pronounces pain.
 What world of misery whirls about us now ?
 Go then, and quickly, go as free as thought,
 To live, and love, in Happiness afar ;
 Think not of me, unless it bring thee joy,
 Stamp out my memory if it tinge of pain,
 For I am patient ; dedicate to thee,
 Thro' Life, and Death, beside thee, or afar.

QUEN. If Life possess me I will come again,
 Faithful, unfaltering, and firm thro' all
 Of this brief pilgrimage. Life's but a stage ;
 If I precede thee Love, I shall await
 Thy coming at the inner doors of Death,
 For there we must meet tho' we're parting now. (*chant*)

ADEL. Farewell !

QUEN. One more kiss ;
 How cold your lips, and mine are dry and parched.
 Another ?

ADEL. Quentin !

QUEN. Darling, fare thee well ! (*rushes out*)

ADEL. (*reels*) Oh, my God ! (*falls senseless*)

Chant bursts forth Miserere Domine.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Van Tuyt's House.

VAN TUYLT. It grieves me much that she should be so sad ;
 Time brings no antidote to her, of late
 The darkness seems to deepen. 'Tis five years
 Since that youth left ; since then, she flits about,
 As if a bird trifling within its cage ;
 An angel in her tenderness to me.
 She wants not suitors, high, low, young, and old,
 The same calm kindness turns them all away,
 And I'll not press her. He was a brave youth :
 But here she comes. *Exit VAN TUYLT.*

Enter ADELAIDE and ISABEL.

ADEL. Do not, I tire you with these sad complaints ?

But recollect, to you alone I pour

My selfish shameless sorrow, without stint,

To win some solace from your sympathy.

ISA. If we all resembled you, why broken hearts

Would be more plentiful.

ADEL. How is your husband ? Mynheer Dykvort.

ISA. Ugh ! don't speak of him, the thoughts enough.

ADEL. Why, is he rebellious ?

ISA. What, and three weeks married ?

ADEL. Isabel, I fear you are too cruel.

ISA. Cruel ! when he, spite of all my prayers and confessions,
 married me—but now he finds I was the dearest bargain
 of his unfeeling heart.

ADEL. I know you wedded him to save your parents. Have
 you seen Franz ?

ISA. Yesterday, he passed me.

ADEL. He's often here—my fathers fond of him,

And I will let him know the whole truth soon.

ISA. No ! no ! Adelaide.

ADEL. So far as will explain your marriage.

ISA. Dykvort pays dear for it, I'll have every gallant in town
 to dine with us, and then smile at them so he'll choke him-
 self with rage and mortification. He's so jealous.

ADEL. Isabel !

ISA. I have done it already, and I believe he's plotting to
 take me away to some den where I shall see no one, but
 we'll see whose master. I left the door ajar yesterday,
 so of course he's got the gout and can't move to-day.

ADEL. Does he know aught of Quentin ?

ISA. Not a word, tho' he's grown quite jealous of him, from my questions. And you still love?

ADEL. Isabel!

ISA. Forgive me, I jest not at your despair,
You are so silent; laughter is my mask,
That covers all the wounds. Does Franz know aught?

ADEL. Nothing, since that last, five years, it seems
Five centuries, and only two small signs.
The first came soon.

ISA. They always do at first.

ADEL. He had reached Italy, was well and full
Of hope and love, and then long months passed by,
The next said that he labored night and day
With stedfast purpose, and since then, three years,
Have groaned away, and still there comes no word,
My heart grows sick and I am filled with dread.

ADEL. Take courage dearest, all will yet be well.

ADEL. But then so many threads pass and repass,
The current of our lives, each draws, and turns
It somewhat from its path, and who can say
Its future in the web. Shall we e'er meet?
How the fierce chances thicken to mine eye,
Like dust within a sunbeam, Fear revealing
Faiths floating fragments. Oh, I only dream
And then awake into a weary world
Of cold reality, and changeless pain.

ISA. Adelaide you are too good for my weak soul.

ADEL. Nay, you have made the bitterer sacrifice.

ISA. Good heavens! here's my husband.

Enter VAN TUYLT, DYKVORT, leaning on a crutch, and FRANZ.

DYK. Oh, here you are, oh, plague on these shooting pains,
Oh, my poor feet, oh,—well my dear.

ISA. Well sir, what want you here, can I not move
But you must dog me?

DYK. I longed for the air, oh? a little exercise, oh?

ISA. Pray continue your excursion.

DYK. May I not stay here—oh! a little rest.

ISA. No Sir, go!

ADEL. Isabel!

ISA. Well for your sake. Will you not speak to me?

FRANZ. What should I say?

ISA. Anything—nothing.

FRANZ. I know my circumstances.

ISA. And I mine—come husband, lean on me, there Adelaide

FRANZ. Let me assist you. [good-bye.

DYK. Thanks, these twitches pain me, oh, but my wife is
enough—do not let me trouble you, oh.

VAN T. Let me help you. *Exit all but ADELAIDE.*

ADEL. No tidings, not a word, earth seems a blank.

Alas! what consolation can be mine,

Help love, that made those long past days so bright,
 That leavest them now all comfortless and drear,
 That swallowed up my soul, and ruled all else,
 Making me all love, and now loves regret.
 My hopes are scattered, only faith remains,
 And that burns low within my empty breast.

Enter VAN TUYLT.

What shall I do? Whot can I do? but wait,
 Wait thro' the weary days and wakeful nights,
 Wait while my soul starves, and my heart runs dry,
 Wait while my joys depart, my dreams desert,
 Wait while my youth decays,—wait till I die.

(Sinks on her knees)

Oh, though, who knowest how much I love, look down
 And grant me help; it cannot be that love
 Has aught of ill, since it is thy first law,
 Thy Son was love incarnate—therefore hear,
 We only know thee thro' thy works, and he
 Was most Divine, so noble and so true;
 For this I loved him, love him more than all
 In earth or heaven as being most of Thee,
 Thro' him I worship Thee, Oh, glorious One,
 I too have suffered, grant that also I
 May rise from out my sorrow free from sin,
 Lend me the fire that lit Thee thro' thy life,
 Unto the dreadful rest upon the cross.
 Yet if my prayer is evil, or if it
 Would cost him aught,—I pray that only he
 May live in happiness, in peace and love.
 Great, good and glorious—cast my hope aside,
 But give me strength, or death, if not my love.

VAN T. Nay, start not so, I have o'erheard it all,
 Am humbled by thee—my sweet child forgive
 Your fathers sin.

ADEL. I forgive,
 My father, I have nothing to forgive.

VAN T. Yes, for I have done wrong, most bitter wrong,
 And now would make a tardy recompence.
 You love this youth? come lean upon my breast,
 And he was worthy thee, and I was vile
 To spurn thy happiness; but thy sweet prayer
 Has taught me how debased.

ADEL. No father, no,

VAN T. My dearest you have been to me indeed
 A priceless treasure, and have given me
 A thousand-fold what I gave, or deserved,
 Soothing my brow, guiding my steps to peace,
 The while I tortured you.

ADEL. Oh, hush it was not so,

VAN T. And I have sinned, in that I kept this dear

This cherished prize unto myself, and said
 She is so beautiful, so good, that I
 Would fain possess her virtue utterly.
 I sinned, and when you gave your fresh young heart
 To one most worthy, harshly banished him.
 Breaking thy heart with sorrow, this deep crime
 Can you forgive me.

ADEL. Yes, dear father, yes,
 You did not know his value, or his truth.

VAN T. You heap hot coals of fire upon my head,
 But now I left Dykvort, in a few days space
 He leaves for Italy.

ADEL. For Italy !

VAN T. And we go with him to seek out thy love,
 Pray him to pardon me the old offence,
 To clear my oath, myself shall be his master,
 With thee beside him. it shall then go hard,
 But he full soon surpass me and win thee.

ADEL. Heaven has heard my prayer.
 It is too much.

VAN T. Come, let us swift prepare,
 And weave a bridal wreath.

ADEL. Quentin, my father, Quentin ! *Exit BOTH.*

SCENE II.

A Studio.

QUEN. As one who from his casement leans what time
 His labor o'er, the day dies bathed in crimson,
 Paling around the pinky coronal,
 That binds its brows, and waits the foremost star,
 The tenderest, to lead him to his love ;
 While his heart reaches forth o'er hill and plain,
 And valley shadows ; so I hunger now,
 Resting upon the spoils of dear delight,
 Won by endeavour from the glorious Art,
 The unknown splendor of my youthful dream,
 Crowning me unawares, as angels one
 Who seeking Right, awakes and finds it Heaven.
 Stray beams now shoot down thro' dividing space,
 From my sweet star of love, and soon I'll bask
 Beneath its fullness, piercing the dull night,
 Of my long solitude with peace and joy.

Enter PAULO.

PAULO What Quentin ! neither Painting, Reading, Singing, or
 writing Sonnets, what now ?

QUEN. Dreaming.

PAULO Always dreaming, but rarely idle.

QUEN. I have finished them.

PAULO What your three pictures, and already.

QUEN. Yes, my last efforts e'er, I journey towards
My mother land, that shines Auroralike
With fiery streaks of dear remembrance,
Into my lonely night.

PAULO Haste, let me see them, I am all on fire.

QUEN. Such as they are behold them, imaging
Thro' these old fables, those of Icarus,
Prometheus and Sisyphus, the strife
Of Art with Nature, Fate and the Ideal,

PAULO Quentin, you have done nobly, wonderfully,
And if her father can surpass these gems
He must be great indeed.

QUEN. I fear you overrate them.

PAULO Why do you love these awful scenes and deeds?
Titanic in their strength, and majesty,
And these harsh faces that malign your walls,
When all might be as is this Icarus,
In sunny skies, flowers, streams and loveliness?

QUEN. They all are Beautiful, but these are Great,
So deadly is the strife with Fate and Ill,
That greatness, larger beauty, loses part
Of its soft tones, as youth's red rounded cheek,
Beside the weighty forehead of the man,
And these bleak faces speak to me of home,
They're sanctified by sorrow, scorning sin;
Glory comes not to every sphere of life.
There are sweet simple touches lower down.
Like sunbeams in chill valleys, lighting thro'
Long bitterness, long weariness, long toil
The common lot—the new nobility—
The brotherhood of Toil.

PAULO That icy land of thine hath dulled thy sense
With sober autumn tints, save in one face,
You give your saints, and that is fair indeed.

QUEN. It is not worthy her.
If you could see her, with the Light of Life
Transfusing her fair form and features, with
A beatific splendor, as suns rays
Transfuse and glorify the graceful clouds
To lovelier loveliness—you'd tear them down,
But now these paltry images embody
To me, the soul and spirit of my love,
As empty idols, to a worshipper,
Symbols of glory inexpressible,
By any sign or speech.

PAULO Well, well, I've a favor to ask of you.

Enter VISCONTI.

QUEN. What back again Visconti?

VIS.

Even so.

PAULO You are not well ?

VIS. A little fatigued with the journey.

PAULO But look at Quentin's pictures, are they not marvellous?

VIS. Yes, certainly. (*slowly*)

QUEN. Oh, leave them, they are nothing.

PAULO Well Quentin, my favor is this ; you know Rechim, the old usuer, who has assisted my careless purse at sundry times, now grows currish, and not only refuses further supplies, but presses for a settlement.

QUEN. Well, I trust its not heavy—I'll see to it.

PAULO No, No, I'll not pay him in that coin, but I have bribed one of his men, and what do you think the scoundrel is plotting? Why, to arrest me this afternoon as I leave the church—the old villain—now this is my idea, there will be a horse awaiting me at the south porch after the marriage is over I leap upon it, and away by the other road to join you in half an hour at the festival.

QUEN. Excellent ! but what part am I to play ?

PAULO Why, I want you to lead Julia out, for she refuses to let any one else make me jealous.

QUEN. I am too much honored, assure her I will not fail her.

PAULO Then all is settled.

VIS. (*aside*), What other dart is this that fortune thrusts,
New winged and barbed, into my loaded hand?
Surely the devil gives it, but I'll use it,
Tho' it were red hot from its native Hell,
To overwhelm him with one deadly blow.
Now I must be more cautious.

PAULO Well Visconti, what of the city dames ?

VIS. Nothing to a young wife that I saw with a party of foreigners ; by the way I think they came from your land.

QUEN. Indeed how looked she ?

VIS. Tall, and supremely fair,
Large eyes of grey, soft, yet imperial,
A lilys grace, and yet a roses bloom,
With motion like spirit branches bending graceful,
To a rich blossomed wind.

QUEN. A wife ! what name ?

VIS. Some harsh guttural.

QUEN. I am a fool to tear
My heart with such swift fancies, yet I thought
Earth held no other who might fill those words.
Her hair, what color ?

VIS. Brown, a golden brown.

QUEN. Brown is the shade that crowns a thousand heads.
But hers was brown.

PAULO Why, what is this ?

QUEN. Her husband ?

VIS. Why, do you know them ? he was a young gallant,
Blue eyed, and stalwart as an elm.

QUEN. What Franz ? it cannot be !

VIS. You seem moved?

QUEN. Moved! Is a mountain moved, whose forests fall,
Whose hollows hold the remnants of its head,
All whelmed in one convulsion of its breast.

PAULO 'Tis not your love?

QUEN. No, No, it cannot be, 'tis not my love,
It is a spectral shadow, flitting ghastly
Thro' my dark night of ignorance and fear,
Some school-boy terror. It is not my love,
It is my madness—but the sudden shock,
Sent a swift thrill tho' all my coward veins.
Now I am calm again.

PAULO Come, we must to the church.

VIS. (*aside*), All then goes well, by now they should be here,
I'll straight to them.

QUEN. Not long these fears shall prey,
Upon my heart; I'll start to-morrow morn,
For home and happiness. *Exit ALL.*

SCENE III.

A wayside on the Mountain. People pass in holiday attire.

Enter ADELAIDE, her FATHER and FRANZ.

VAN T. A lovely land, small wonder that it is
The Home of Art.

ADEL. Indeed 'tis beautiful.
The little village nestled there below,
Scarce half-a-mile, is basking in the hollow.
See that procession winding to and fro,
A mountain bridal—hark! the music rises,
How happy they must be—what Isabel?

ISA. I cannot help it—that recalls to me
The day I sold myself.

ADEL. Forget it, now you are free;
And nobly for he thanked you at the last.
Poor Dykvort, he died suddenly.

ISA. But when they go from us, however defiled,
It seems their spirits smite us to the heart,
With memory of all-forgotten things
That we would bury.

ADEL. Your repentance is enough.
Come Franz and cheer her.

VAN T. Hope cheers you now, beneath his gentle airs,
The pale bud of the north is blossoming,
Rich, red, and scented, into beauty's bloom.

ADEL. That is a lovers speech.

VAN T. And am I not a lover? ah, full soon
This little ear will list to other tunes,

Stronger and sweeter, and be deaf to mine.

ADEL. No, never, never.

VAN T. Fathers should be lovers, without their jealousy.

Is't so my sweet.

ADEL. Dear father

VAN T. Here comes our kind friend, Visconti.

How fortunate we are in having him to guide us.

ADEL. Somewhat too kind.

Enter VISCONTI.

VIS. I was detained a little, at the bridal. The belle of the village is to be married to one of the best painters, and all are gathered to the rejoicing. But I have seen preparations made for you.

VAN T. I thank you: now we can advance.

ADEL. Do you know more now?

VIS. Within the hour you shall see the truth.

Exit VAN TUYLT, VISCONTI and ADELAIDE.

FRANZ. If tears were coin that could pay a debt,

Then would they answer.

ISA. But they tell my grief,

For my misconduct and for many things.

FRANZ. Seek absolution in another shape,

Pay down good deeds and smiling glances, so
That others may be glad; You would not have
Your grief infectious?

ISA. Well, I will try. See, they are gaining.

FRANZ. That new friend of ours is as gentle as a dove,

Kind as a brother, but some men are masks,
Doves, pigeons, if not worse and brothers, well
Cæsar loved Brutus better than a brother.

Exit.

SCENE IV.

Square before the Chapel—Music—Bridal Procession pass over—

PAULO and JULIA, QUENTIN and others following enter the church.

Enter RECHIM and OFFICERS.

RECH. Be not afraid, mind your reward, and you shall have
as many flasks as you can drink, if you seize him.

OFFICERS Never fear for us.

RECH. Was it not well devised? He shall have a nice cell to
spend his wedding day in. Oh, this is better than gold.

Ha, ha. Mind take no money if that young straight lace
Quentin Massys offer it—Oh, it is so sweet, ha, ha.

OFFICERS Ha, ha, we will do it.

RECH. Come, take post,

Enter VAN TUYLT, ADELAIDE, VISCONTI, FRANZ and ISABEL.

VAN T. 'Tis a sweet spot,

VIS. You see but few people, most are in the chapel ; you can hear the music, if you wait you will see the bridal—'tis a pretty sight and pleasant, Pray stay,

VAN T. Certainly, Look at yonder hill, how fair it is,

ISA. FRANZ, look at those men stealing about.

FRANZ. Peacocks, men love red coats better than bulls,

ADEL. Tell me all—I am not afraid—I can bear it.

VIS. Then strengthen yourself.

ADEL. Is he dead ?

VIS. No.

ADEL. Ill or dying ?

VIS. Neither.

ADEL. Poor or unfortunate ?

VIS. Well and Happy.

ADEL. Not false ?

VIS. Will you see ?

ADEL. (*reels*) Oh Heaven ! (*music grows louder*)

VIS. I dare not tell you what my heart knows ; I pity you : let it be unknown.

ADEL. Never ! not if I were to see him in her arms, to see them wedded. Tell me (*music louder*)

Procession appears.

QUEN. (*leading Julia*) Follow us friends, let all be mirth and joy, To crown our happiness this blessed day.

RECH. Deceived, oh thousand devils !

VIS. There's the Truth ! (*stepping to Quentin*) Behold the Bride !

ADELAIDE and QUENTIN meet face to face. FRANZ supports her.

Music—The Procession passes on.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

A Room in a Villa—ADELAIDE lying on a couch, and ISABEL.

ADEL. How fades the day ?

ISA. Slowly, behind the hill
Night comes apace ; the stars unveil their heads,
Delivered from the heat, and all is still.
There is a drowsy murmur in the air,
A scent of orange blossoms, and a warmth

As of a lovers breath.

ADEL. My day is dead ;
But then I have no Stars, and the dark night
Fell suddenly upon a summer scene
That promised orange blossoms, and the scent
That fills the room must tell that they are faded,
Its breath grows chilly as from Love's lips dead.

ISA. Do not speak so sadly.

ADEL. I prayed for Truth and Light ;
My prayer is granted, and I should be thankful,
Tho' it has blinded me. Why do men pray ?
Provoking Fortune in their impotence,
To grant their wish and consummate their fall.
We should but pray for Patience, for all else
Lies in a wiser hand than ours.

ISA. Fire yourself with scorn, contempt, or hate.

ADEL. Hush ! what have I to scorn, contemn, or hate ?
He once gave all for me, and if these years
Have taught him greater wisdom, or perchance
Given a sweeter flower to his hand,
Why should I hate him ? nay, I owe him much ;
And if my little straw life whirl and sink
Within the foam of his far sailing galleon,
Let it be so : my task is ended now,
Showing my faith unsullied.

ISA. How then his ?

ADEL. I bade him live all free.

ISA. It may be noble to grant liberty ;
To do that, if 'twere done, 'twere villainous.

ADEL. I love him still, with love that best becomes
A maiden for a man whose vow's another's ;
Tho' thro' the quietness of its pale beams,
A reddened lustre, still will blaze the zenith
Of my unruly mind, with sunset of
Another power. How happy she must be.

ISA. Here comes Visconti thro' the vines.

ADEL. Quick, haste !

I am too weak to see him.

ISA. Trust me for that.

ADEL. He wounds my ear
With his presumption ; quicky, e'er he enter.

Exit ISABEL.

Peace, peace ! I pray you enter in this breast,
And strive for mastery, bring Resignation,
Calm Patience, and sweet Faith. No ! not a Hope
That may not be ; and strive with this strong Love,
Bind up the wounded tendril to the staff
Of Duty, lead it o'er its trellises,
That it may bear its fruit ; and bind it soon,
For 'tis too weak to hold the withered flower,
Love wasted to Despair : quick, hasten, else

It will snap with the weight of sorrow's wind,
 And let it die, as guilty wishes would.
 Oh, what is there for me but to sit still,
 And let grief work its wayward way throughout
 My soul's delights, and eat them one by one.

(Taking out a portrait)

My Love, who now no longer may exist
 As Love or Idol, I must enter now,
 And take thee tenderly from out thy shrine
 Within my breast. Thou, that wast all in all,
 That did sustain this simple fane, while it
 Was sanctified to thee; in sorrow clad,
 I lift thee thence. Farewell, the tottering walls
 Fall in, and crush me in my empty woe!

Casts it from her—Falls on the couch.

SCENE II.

A Wayside. Enter PAULO following VISCONTI.

PAULO. What, ho Visconti, where go you?

VIS. Home!

PAULO. Home! you look ill.

PAULO. If I should in this open countenance
 Display the inward beauty of my soul,
 You would not call me ill.

PAULO. You speak wildly.

VIS. Wildly! then my words belie their master;
 There is a riotous glee within my veins.
 Come some red wine.

PAULO. Have you been drinking?

VIS. Drinking! yes, a draught
 Would turn the strongest head, for 'tis compounded
 Of all the fiercest elements that make
 The mind of man, or feed the fires of Hell.

PAULO. Well, will you come to Quentin's?

VIS. No!

PAULO. Why, hath he offended you?

VIS. No, no! what mean you.

PAULO. Quentin, you know, for two days past has been locked
 up and sees no one, since he fled from Julia in a whirlwind
 of passion; he must be mad, I must see him.

VIS. I will come, he may have killed himself.

PAULO. Great Heavens! what are you dreaming of?

VIS. Nothing, nothing! She would not see me; she knows
 me, oh devils! *(rushes out)*

PAULO. He must have been drinking!

Exit.

SCENE III.

QUENTIN'S *Studio.*QUEN. (*Painting, throws down the brush*)

Live there, forever there, thou loveliness,
 Before mine eyes, since in no other place
 I may regard you ; live forever there
 In thy perfection. I have outdone myself,
 For I have painted thee in my heart's blood,
 And every beauteous line, and every glow,
 Speak of my passion ; I have hung above
 Those breathing lips, and liquid lambent orbs,
 Till from mine own has fled the life to them.
 Oh awful victory, oh Art, my Art,
 What dost thou ask from thy poor worshippers ?
 Upon thy altar I have offered up
 Myself, my soul, and her, and from the ruin
 Built up in thee an Epitaph to say,
 " Here lies a life, a bleeding heart turned stone,
 Yet faithful ever to its Love and me." (*seizes his brush*)
 I must be calm, oh yet in this dark task
 Thy power entrances me ; as thus I pour
 My heart into my colours, I lose pain,
 Sorrow, and suffering, and absorb the man.
 With all his griefs, his madness, and his fire,
 Into the Artist, and the joy of Art.
 How my brush flies, two days I have pursued,
 Almost unfed, this vision, that now grows
 Close to completion. There, no more to night,
 The morning sees my Mausoleum raised,
 Where sweet embalmed in Life's most lovely tints,
 We lie together, silent, cold and still.
 How fair she looks, I almost lose my heart
 To my creation ; in her tearful gaze
 Lies all our story. Oh remorseless Fate,
 That ever waits, with mocking smile, to dash
 The cup of joy from my hard handed toil :
 Hast thou no mercy ? no, the gods have none ;
 Their tuneful purposes know naught of man,
 The race is but a paltry thread within
 A Universal loom ; and what if all
 Snap, rend, and ruin, it can alter not
 The deep design, or mar their happiness.
 Parted forever, let me taste the air,
 Could I not see her e'er I leap from off
 My height of Hope and Love down the dark precipice,
 Upon the rocks, Despair, that dash to nothing,
 All Joy, and Faith, and Peace ! Once, once I'll see her
 Thro' Fate's damned dark, tho' by the lurid light

Of my own burning heart. (*rushes out*) *pause*

Enter VISCONTI.

VIS. 'Twas he then ; yes, all's silence. I now hold
The last strong link of the accursed chain,
Shall doom him to Destruction evermore,
And her to Sorrow. Ah ! before he came
I was the Painter's King, he far surpassed me ;
Before I saw her I was calm and strong,
Now, thrice three thousand devils drink my blood :
Envy and Jealousy. But in this deed
I'll now conclude it ; fire these works of his,
On which hang all his Future and his Hopes,
And in this crowning stroke revenge myself,
Destroy his Love, his Fortune, and his Fame.
Yes, there is no sound—now tremble Heaven.
(lights a torch and approaches)
Great God ! what's this ; her image risen to
Arrest my act, how sweet, how heavenly,
Its loveliness o'erpowers my wicked soul,
It drinks me up ; Oh, I am not so base.
His Art has conquered, he is Good and Great,
And I am Evil. God forgive my sin.
(sinks on his knees)

SCENE IV.

Exterior of the Villa.

Enter QUENTIN.

This is the house, some ragged tree shall give me
View of her, sitting by her husband's side,
His hand slow toying with her drooping locks,
The cheerful lamplight brooding o'er their kiss,
While I swing silent gainst the darkened sky.
They must not dream of it ; be still my heart,
Let not one drop of thy regretful blood
Drop in the goblet of their nuptial joy :
If thou wilt flow, then let it be against
A sunset sky, or in some still black pool,
Thick, fathomless, between the cypresses,
In clotted clusters, thro' the slimy ooze.
I will venture now,
Imprint the memory of her look upon
A hardening heart, now seething in its wrath,
Time as it cools it, shall retain this face
Unalterable, unchanging to the end ;
Stamped in the metal, like an angels, smiling
Upon a funeral urn.

Exit.

SCENE V.

Garden by Night.

ADEL. I leave them to themselves, for in their hearts
Spirits that which dies in mine ; my flower bloomed
Thro' winter, and now scatters in the spring.

*(Music—she walks up and turns)**Enter QUENTIN. (as the moon bursts out they meet)*

QUEN. Adelaide !

ADEL. Quentin ! what dost thou here ?

QUEN. And is it thus we meet ? 'Twas unforeseen.

ADEL. Stay ! I would say farewell.

QUEN. Since Love is now cast out from my sad breast,
I say it calmly, praying that all blessings
Be showered on thee ; I will waste no words,
I know the Truth, and all is useless now,
Save Fare thee well.

ADEL. *(slowly)* And you are happy ?

QUEN. Can you ask me that ?

ADEL. Forgive me, I forgot.

QUEN. I must forget.

ADEL. I do not understand.

QUEN. It is better so,

Since it forebodes thee Peace ; keep thine eyes closed
Upon the world, if thou wouldest rest in joy,
For sight is sorrow, and all knowledge pain.

ADEL. Oh, do not speak so. So we part.

QUEN. Give me thy hand ; this much I may without
Evil demand, now let me fade away
From thee, and from thy memory, as the mist
That hovers round these trees neath the next sun.

ADEL. Farewell, God guard thee and thy happy Bride.

QUEN. Bride ! could you not spare me this ?

ADEL. Spare you ! oh, Quentin,
What would I not spare you, but your hot words
Breed strange new fears within an aching heart.
Do you not love her, that you speak so harshly ?
Nay, answer not, but let my last poor prayer
To thee be for her sake ; oh cherish well
Her gentle beauty, love her, for you know not
How we do live in Love ; the slightest word
Of thine has power to slay her, and neglect,
Oh God ! is bitterer than a thousand blows.

QUEN. Could you not keep this arrow in your string,
I cannot tell you all, but never Bride
Of mine shall mock my desolated Life.

ADEL. What ! did I not see her in the Square.

QUEN. I led my friend's Bride : oh, degrade me not,
I ne'er accused you, but let no false dream

That I was faithless shelter you—I blame not.
But you have little mercy.

ADEL. Not wedded! Quentin!

QUEN. Adelaide! let no temptation blind you: Love is sweet
When crowned with Honor, but no infamy
Can e'er surpass its fall. There, leave me now.
My friend, your husband!

ADEL. Husband! I have none.

QUEN. Art thou not wife to Franz?

ADEL. Wife to no man, and loving none but thee.

(falls on his neck)

QUEN. This is some dream—Visconti named you wedded.

ADEL. Thus too he lied to me; but thou art true.

QUEN. Once more once mine, how can I think or speak
Beneath this press of joy, my senses reel.

ADEL. Hush, some one comes. Let us unravel all. *Exit.*

Enter FRANZ and ISABEL.

FRANZ. Adelaide must have returned. *(pause)*

ISA. Shall we?

FRANZ. Not unless you wish it. *(long pause)*

ISA. You did not see him?

FRANZ. No, he cannot be found.

ISA. It is so strange.

FRANZ. I cannot doubt him, but the Time was long.

ISA. Tush! what is Time in Love?

FRANZ. As in all else Time is the ruler, you may wed when
your hair is brown or grey; you may be free only when
she is in the grave, or she loveless till you are ruined. *(pause)*

ISA. According to you then, we should use the present.

FRANZ. Yes—Yes! Shall we go on? *Exit slowly.*

Enter QUENTIN and ADELAIDE.

QUEN. Thy father's purpose is most noble,
But since I fail so utterly to win
Power or Skill, am I not then unworthy?

Nay, listen to me.

You see a poor proud churl without renown,
Who paints, is not a painter, —mark you that—
A poor proud fool, who loves you well enough
To leave you better happiness, and go.

ADEL. Am I so base as take that thing from you
I dare not give, or is my Love so chill
That you should doubt me.

QUEN. But I am worthless,
Friendless, hopeless, and despicable.

ADEL. I will not listen further, what you are
Or what you will be, is no care of mine;
You are my cherished Love, my Life of Life,
My Hope, my Glory, Fortune, Joy, and Lord,
If you will have me; will you take the gift?

QUEN. And give myself for you.

ADEL. Then to my Father.

QUEN. Trust me in this, I must not see him ;
Nor thou speak to him for another day.

ADEL. Trust you against all Fear, all Life, or Death,
Thro' all eternity, with my whole soul. *(they go out)*

Enter ISABEL and FRANZ.

ISA. You seem silent ?

FRANZ. I am worshipping.

ISA. The moon ?

FRANZ. Something as fair,

ISA. And that is ?

FRANZ. Silence again

Would better tell than my rough coward tongue :

But since it must come,—

If what I say offend you, turn away,

And if—ah Isabel, you know 'tis you ;

I cannot speak—you do not turn away ?

ISA. You forgot to say what signified consent ?

FRANZ. Did-I-I-still forget.

ISA. *(giving him her hand)* Is that enough ?

FRANZ. *(embracing her)* That's it.

ISA. Franz, I have loved you always, when I married
To save my parents, it knew no decline,
Now I am all yours.

FRANZ. My Isabel ! *(they go out)*

Enter QUENTIN and ADELAIDE.

QUEN. Yes, thou art lovelier now, my beautiful,
Than e'er before, for beneath the ardent Sun
Of this fair clime, its loveliness unfolds
The sister spirit sleeping in your breast,
Your smiles outrivalling its sunny skies,
Your words its sweetest songsters, and your breath
Its fragrant fascinations, all bright blending,
Intoxicating as its generous vines,
Rich purple fruitage.

ADEL. And you are dearer.

Is not this a dream ?

QUEN. It is a dream, for Love is always such,
And yet most true, since you are true to me,
Like yonder moon thou risest on my path,
Turning the darkness into radiant light.

ADEL. I, like the moon have wandered lone and long,
Thro' blank and weary fields of Space, until
I pour upon thy bosom in a swoon
Of silent Happiness and rapturous Love.

QUEN. What need we more ? I would that Time could pass
By this one spot, and o'er our clasping hands,
While the wide woeworn world rolled round and round

Upon its weary path, men rose and sank ;
 Death and Decay, Kings of all else beside,
 Should leave us kissing neath the tranquil stars.

ADEL. We part no more—no more of pain or fear.

QUEN. This hour is ours, won by hard toil from out
 The Hunger of Eternity, the Thirst
 Of Ravenous Time, that sucks all Life Springs dry ;
 Then let us drink it deep down to the dregs.

VAN TUYLT. (*without*) Adelaide !

ADEL. My father !

QUEN. There, my dearest, till to-morrow—kiss, my sweet. *Exit.*

VAN T. Adelaide !

ADEL. Yes, father.

Enter FRANZ, ISABEL, and VAN TUYLT.

VAN T. Come, it grows late, and we must be up betimes. The
 Count de' Cena has arrived, and invited me to accompany
 him to-morrow, when he will inspect the Artists' Studios.

ADEL. Is that the Great Count ?

VAN T. Yes, the greatest in Italy ; his word is law with all
 Painters, his judgment final, and his Palace has the noblest
 Gallery in Europe.

FRANZ. What brings him here ?

VAN T. A strange story—but come, it grows late. *Exit ALL.*

SCENE IV.

The Village—QUENTIN passing—Enter VISCONTI.

VIS. Stay ! read this confession.

QUEN. (*tearing it*) There, let the birds read it ; I know all.
 Come man, cheer up, Passion will blind us oft,
 But Reason rescues, and Repentance blesses.

VIS. Do you not spurn me ?

QUEN. Tush ! you are a new friend—but have you sent your
 Paintings to the great Hall ? The Count de' Cena, the
 greatest Critic in Italy, is to examine them.

VIS. I could not face them.

QUEN. Come, we cannot spare you—I will send them with mine.

VIS. Is this your revenge ?

QUEN. No, this is my friendship—but haste, we are all anxiety,
 and you must join us. None know of it save us, and it is
 locked safe in our breasts.

VIS. I thank the God who put my plots to shame. *Exit BOTH.*

SCENE V.

A Hall with Pictures, One Covered—Artists --

1st ARTIST. Our Fame hangs on his words, his slightest com-

mentation is worth a Fortune.

2nd ART. There is no other man in Europe whose taste is ranked so high.

3rd ART. Quentin Massys' colours blind mine.

4th ART. How I tremble—If he should only speak of mine, I'll worship him.

5th ART. Hush, they are coming.

Enter PAULO.

PAULO. Now then, away with you ; here he comes—I am the spokesman, so get you gone. *Exit ALL.*

Flourish—Enter COUNT DE' CENA, VAN TUYLT, ADELAIDE, ISABEL, and FRANZ.

PAULO. My Lord, you see our humble efforts here.

COUNT. I need no further go, here lies my aim,
The Entombment had the self-same touch in it.
Struck by its wondrous Beauty I inquired
Who of our greatest limned it, and then found
It claimed this village for its birthplace ; straight
Upon the word I came here to discover
The Glorious Artist—I have found him now.
Who is he ?

PAULO. He is dead.

COUNT. Alas, that my poor praise should come too late,
And that the world should lose so rich a treasure.

VAN T. Indeed, they are most beautiful.

PAULO. (*unveiling the picture*)

This is his latest work which his fond fingers
Finished and stiffened in the selfsame hour.
This represents our World of woe and want,
Its sin and suffering, and its fallen Lord
Dabbling in dust ; while its strange tale has reached
A spotless Angel in her distant home,
Who slipt in haste from out her native Heaven
Of Endless Love and Joy, now penetrates,
Since all is open to Immortal minds,
The world in all its naked hideousness,
Its Miseries, its Mockeries, its Pain.
With streaming eyes, and bleeding heart and hands,
She vainly strives to save them from their Sin ;
Floating in spotless white, unfelt, unseen,
Amid the darkness, like a fresh sunbeam
Into a Charnel House ; one only lists
Falling an easy prey to the foul wolves
Who rend him, while his eyes still stare the air,
Wrapt in his Vision of her Loveliness ;
She smiles thro' tears at him, and toiling still,
To ease their pain foregoes a Paradise.
Arts Mission in the World.

VAN T. I know that face—those wondrous wistful eyes,
Brimming with Love, and hope of hope denied,

While yet within their depths there seems to rise,
A gentle timid ray of Faith and Peace,
Tinging the features, like the After glow
Upon snow summits, with a faint rosegleam.

COUNT. This is the grandest—those dark awful forms,
And that fair star—Design and execution
Are marvellous alike.

If he had lived, there is no height in Art
He might not have attained to, for in these
There is the stamp of Royal Genius.

ADEL. (*perplexed*) His face the one who lists; who was he?

PAULO. Scarce seven and twenty.

VAN T. Oh, most worthy youth,
When I, in all these years of eager toil
Of Love and Patience, never in the proudest
Of my achievements reached unto his skirt.
Who painted these?

QUEN. (*stepping out*) Then keep your word,
Your ancient challenge, and your solemn oath:
I claim your daughter for the Picture's mine.

VAN T. Thine, traitor!

ADEL. Quentin, oh Heaven! he is not a traitor;
He is my Love and Faithful.

VAN T. Faithful!

QUEN. And kneeling for your blessing.

VAN T. Take it in God's name.

Enter ARTISTS and ALL.

COUNT. Young man, the noblest future lies before thee,
Much yet remains to do, more than thy Life
Will give thee space; but still take heart, for thou
Art crowned with Powers Noble and Divine.

QUEN. I thank you sir, and strive to merit it.

ADEL. Oh, cruel Lover, to torment me so.

FRANZ. Joy, old fellow, joy.

ISA. And we will join you.

QUEN. Yes, we shall float adown Life's gentle stream
Together—all is summed up in that word,
Together—still together, Life in Life,
Far forward to Futurity, still nearer
To the Eternal's Throne; for Love and Art
Compose Divinity.

ADEL. My dearest one,
To me thou art Love, Art, Divinity.

PAULO. Come now, a cheer for Quentin Massys.

QUEN. And his bride.

Great Cheering.

— F I N I S . —



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